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Spy agencies learn 'Joe Sixpack is a security risk'

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WASHINGTON — The classic spy suspect in Hollywood movies and in FBI doctrine used to be one and the same guy. He was an intellectual, possibly a scientist; a political liberal, possibly a joiner of communist front groups, or a recent immigrant, possibly with a German or Slavic name.

Such people sold out their country because they believed there was a higher morality in Moscow.

Alger Hiss fit this mold, as did David Greenglass, Judith Coplon, Klaus Fuchs and the rest of the atomic spy ring of the Forties. It was a perfectly valid concept, as far as it went. But it is far out of date in today's world.

The arrest of still more suspects in the John Walker espionage case proves again that the modern spy is likely to be motivated by money rather than ideology. And he is at least as likely to be a blue-collar, conservative, career military man with the outward trappings of American patriotism as he is to fit the outworn cliche.

In the words of Vernon Guidry, who is watching this case for *The Sun*:

"Joe Sixpack is a security risk."

There is a reasonable and serious question of whether that fact has fully sunk in on the agencies charged with protecting this country against treason.

John Walker, the alleged central figure in the current case, was a submariner who spent 21 years in the navy before retiring as a chief warrant officer. He set himself up as a private detective. He kept a photo of Ronald Reagan on his desk. He talked enthusiastically about the John Birch Society, and his friendship with bigwigs in the Ku Klux Klan.

His son, a sailor aboard the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz, and his brother, a retired lieutenant commander who had become an engineer doing classified work for a defense company, also were arrested. Next came another retired Navy communications specialist. All had clearance for handling sensitive secret material.

And all were just the kind of people the FBI or your local police department love to enlist in their own ranks because they seem certified loyal citizens.

It is natural that law enforcers are less suspicious of their own kind of people. Soviet agents seeking Americans for espionage were onto this long ago.

Among the spies who have been accused of doing serious damage to U.S. interests in recent years is Richard Miller, the FBI agent charged with taking $65,000 for documents disclosing intelligence secrets. He allegedly did business with the Russians during an intimate affair with an emigre named Svetlana Ogorodnikov.

Miller is a Mormon; Mormons and Irish Catholics, often assumed to be unquestioningly loyal, are among the groups most intensively recruited by U.S. intelligence organizations.

Money supposedly motivated Thomas Patrick Cavanaugh, a Northrop engineer arrested in California and charged with offering to sell data on the super-classified Stealth bomber. Richard Craig Smith, a former army intelligence officer, was accused of selling for $11,000 the identities of half a dozen double agents serving the United States.

James Harper, a Silicon Valley electronics expert, was charged with taking $250,000 in exchange for secrets relating to the Minuteman missile and other weapons. Holden Bell, a Hughes Aircraft engineer, was charged with taking photographs of advanced radar and other high-tech equipment for a promise of $100,000 in cash and gold coins.

Two of the most serious incursions were by young Christopher Boyce and William Kampiles, who sold details on U.S. spy satellites. Boyce was cleared for his job in the code vault of a California defense contractor largely on the strength of the fact that his father was a retired FBI agent. Kampiles was a former CIA employee.

FBI Director William H. Webster said not long ago that more people were being caught for espionage than ever before. Some credited the FBI's expanded effort. Others noted that many of those caught, including John Walker and his associates, were charged with operating for years undetected before they were given away by their own mistakes or by an informer.

Security officials trying to explain the epidemic of spy activity by people who seem to be straight-arrow Americans suggest that one factor is age — that most of the offenders were not around during World War II, when patriotism was instilled so deeply.

That analysis may apply to many, for example Boyce and Kampiles, to people who were in college during the Vietnam period when it was fashionable to oppose the government in Washington. But it does not cover the Walker brothers, who are 47 and 50 years old.

Adm. Thomas H. Moorer is among those who find pure commercialism in the phenomenon. He believes such offenders coldly weigh the possible reward against the possible penalty, and take the risk as if it were a speculative financial investment.

In California's Silicon Valley, for example, there is a booming community of self-centered over-achievers who live beyond their means and need extra cash for luxury cars and other symbols of the good life.

Close to half the Soviet-bloc officials in this country are believed to be intelligence agents. To watch them and all the Americans they come in contact with means surveillance of thousands of people. With those odds, some spies are bound to succeed, but discriminating counterintelligence work can minimize their number.

Good preventive police techniques include drawing up a profile of the typical offender. Recent events suggest that with this in mind, U.S. counterspy operatives could begin each day with a close look in the mirror.